

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
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AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 5344

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PK, AF
SUBJECT: MFA STATEMENT ON DAOUD'S INTERVIEW IN "BUSINESS TIMES"

REF: ISLAMABAD 5279

1. SEVERAL MORNING DAILIES MAY 24 CARRIED "CLARIFICATION" MADE BY
PAK MFA SPOKESMAN REGARDING REMARKS PRESIDENT DAOUD ALLEGEDLY MADE
IN "BUSINESS TIMES" INTERVIEW REPORTED REFTEL. MFA SPOKESMAN WAS
QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH AFGHAN-
ISTAN WAS "PURELY OF A BILATERAL NATURE" AND THAT "THERE IS
NO THIRD PARTY" INVOLVED.

2. IN HIS STATEMENT THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT TALKS ALREADY HELD
BETWEEN BHUTTO AND DAOUD WERE PRODUCTIVE AND POSITIVE, AND IT
WAS AGREED THAT POLITICAL AND "OTHER" DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO
COUNTRIES WOULD BE SETTLED THROUGH PEACEFUL NEGOTIATIONS.
DURING THESE TALKS, CERTAIN SUGGESTIONS WERE MADE BY BOTH
SIDES IN EFFORT TO ACHIEVE A FINAL SETTLEMENT OF PAK-AFGHAN
DIFFERENCES. THE SUGGESTIONS WERE DISCUSSED IN DETAIL AND IT WAS
DECIDED THAT THEY SHOULD BE TAKEN UP AGAIN AT NEXT ROUND OF TALKS
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TO BE HELD IN KABUL. IT WAS HOPED THAT A FINAL SETTLEMENT WOULD
BE REACHED AT THAT TIME. STATEMENT SAID THAT IN MEANTIME "NEGOT-
IATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE OF A PURELY BILATERAL
NATURE. THERE IS NO THIRD PARTY." MOREOVER, SPOKESMAN CONCLUDED,
AT NO STAGE WAS SUGGESTION MADE OR DISCUSSED WHICH COULD HAVE
ANY ADVERSE IMPACT ON PAKISTAN'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND
NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND THAT SOLUTION TO THE POLITICAL DIFFER-

ENCE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE TO BE FOUND WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF PAKISTAN'S CONSTITUTION.

3. BASED ON TALKS WITH MFA AND AFGHAN EMBASSY HERE, IT IS CLEAR THAT "THIRD PARTY" REFERRED TO IN STATEMENT IS BANNED NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY (NAP) AND ITS JAILED LEADERSHIP. IN CONVERSATION BETWEEN EMBOFF AND MFA DIRECTOR (AFGHANISTAN) GUL HASAN, HASAN NOTED THAT STATEMENT REQUIRED NO FURTHER CLARIFICATION AND AVOIDED EXPANDING ON SEVERAL QUESTIONS RAISED EXCEPT TO NOTE THAT "THIRD PARTY" CLEARLY MEANT NAP LEADERSHIP. IN CONVERSATION BETWEEN EMBOFF AND MINISTER-COUNSELOR OF AFGHAN EMBASSY, ABDUL MANSOUR, LATTER STATED THAT AFGHAN EMBASSY HERE SOMEWHAT "PUZZLED" BY MFA STATEMENT. MANSOUR NOTED THAT AFGHANS HAVE PUNCTILIOUSLY AVOIDED COMMENTS ON OR INTERFERENCE IN CURRENT POLITICAL CRISIS IN PAKISTAN. HE ADDED THAT PRESIDENT DAOUD'S INTERVIEW DID NOT CONTAIN ANY CHANGES IN AFGHAN POLICY WHICH WOULD BOTHER THE GOP.

4. COMMENT: MFA STATEMENT IS REITERATION OF PAKISTAN'S POSITION ON NAP AND IT CONTAINS NO CHANGES. GOP MAY HAVE FELT COMPELLED TO RESPOND TO DAOUD'S REPORTED STATEMENTS, WHICH, AT LEAST ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS HERE, ARE REPLAY OF WELL KNOWN AFGHAN POSITION, BECAUSE OF CURRENT POLITICAL UNREST. DAOUD'S COMMENTS AT THIS TIME MAY HAVE TOUCHED OVERLY SENSITIZED PAK NERVES, AND GOP STATEMENT IS MEANT AS A SIGNAL TO AFGHANS AND THE OPPOSITION THAT REGARDLESS OF PRESENT DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS, THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN GOP POSITION OR RESOLVE ON THIS ISSUE.

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